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MUNICIPAL REVIEW 1909-1910

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The social phases of the municipal question are each year receiving an ever-increasing amount of attention, in many places to the exclusion of the political and administrative phases. This tendency is due in no small part to the changing standards of efficiency and perspective. The medical officer of the English Local Government Board, Dr. Arthur Newman, has pointed out that a careful study of infant mortality makes it clear that it is greater under urban life. Moreover, urban life is more destructive under ordinary circumstances for children than for adults. In the counties of Glamorgan, Durham, Lancashire, the West Riding, and Staffordshire, England, the high infant mortality, and in the counties of Oxford, Hereford, Berkshire, and Dorset, the low infantile mortality, are ascribable, in Dr. Newman's judgment, chiefly to the fact that in the former the population lives in houses which are closely massed to a preponderant extent in large villages, or in small or large towns; while in the latter the houses are largely scattered in lonely homesteads, hamlets, and small villages. It is not that any special virtue appertains to the sanitary authorities of the rural counties; it is rather that the sanitary authorities of the counties having high infant mortality have not realized that the risks of urbanization can only be obviated by strenuous and continued effort on their part.

That they can be overcome, that there is no necessary association between dense massing of population on a small horizontal area and a high infant mortality, is shown by the exceptional experience of the Peabody Buildings. These dwellings are occupied by families whose average earnings are under 22 shillings a week. They have eight times as many persons to the acre as London as a whole, and yet in the years from 1905 to

1909 the infant mortality in them was 23 per cent lower than that of London. Substantially the same conclusion may be drawn from American experience.

In an address before the Society of Chicago's Native Sons and Daughters, Chief Sanitary Inspector Ball said that the Chicago of the '70's had a death rate of 24 to the thousand, but the Chicago of 1909 has seen this cut to 14 per thousand. The average age of those who died when the "native sons and daughters" were children was 14 years, but the average age of those who die today is 33. It would be hard, indeed, to exaggerate the gain.

But Chicago has tasks of which the Chicagoans of a former generation knew but little. As the *Evening Post* pointed out: The city has not cut the mortality down without a great effort, and to keep it down is becoming not easier but harder. It takes more vigilance, more scientific research, more administrative machinery. The city is crowded in very closely and the conditions in many wards are pretty serious. "There are several tasks," the *Post* said, "pressing upon the health department, and Mr. Ball's remark that Chicago could no longer maintain the health-fight of a city of the first class on the budget of a city of the second or third class was exactly true. The city council cannot afford to scale down appropriations that mean health and an increased longevity.

Trinity Corporation in New York City has made a comprehensive study of its New York tenements, and has adopted a policy which will serve not only to correct the difficulties and evils that have grown up in past years, but is a striking example of effective dealing with the important question of housing.

Our growing foreign population constitutes another factor in the development of interest in the social phases of the municipal problem. Some idea of the importance of this particular aspect may be gathered from the statement that 37 per cent of the population of New York, 47 per cent of Fall River, Mass., 45 per cent of Lawrence, Mass., 42.6 per cent of Manchester, N.H., 46.4 per cent of Passaic, N.J., and 44.4 per cent of Woonsocket, R.I., to mention only a few typical cases, are foreign

born. Moreover organizations like the bureau of municipal research, the federation of women's clubs, and the educational associations are giving thought and attention to social questions to a degree that is making for a wider appreciation of the need for more attention to these questions. James P. Heaton in discussing the social aspect of city economy in *The Survey* expresses himself as follows:

That the city government plays the most important part in the plans for social betterment may be little thought of by most people, but it is increasingly recognized by various organizations interested in special phases of social work. Each year their directing officials scrutinize most carefully the municipal activities, in so far as these affect their particular fields.

To illustrate one phase of this growth we may quote one further paragraph from Mr. Heaton's plea for additional appropriations:

The Department of Health has asked for a little over \$4,000,000 or an increase of over \$1,300,000. Of this \$316,000 is to enable the department to get 266 additional nurses and 48 medical inspectors so that they can examine the children in all free schools and care for newly born babies and their mothers. The Bureau of Child Hygiene has demonstrated its value and its work is being watched with approval all over the country. The other large increases requested are \$115,000 for the division of contagious diseases, for new inspectors; \$488,000 for the division of hospitals, and \$96,000 for the tuberculosis sanatorium at Otisville. This last is particularly needed to follow up the good work in stamping out tuberculosis to which the department has devoted so much attention this past year. Minor increases that are very desirable are \$51,000 for improved milk inspection and \$12,000 for the Bureau of Records which is in need of a thorough reorganization. None of these needs can be adequately met if an increase is not granted the Health Department. The department requires generous funds to perfect further the system of visiting consumptives monthly in their tenement homes, of inspecting the patients from the hospital to homes where conditions are not proper for their reception. The department would also like to open milk stations to take the place of those closed by Mr. Straus.

In reporting on the local developments in his city, the Secretary of the Syracuse Chamber said that if he were to make any comment upon the municipal changes in his city within recent years, he would inevitably be attracted to the increase of the functions which the municipal government in his city was being called upon to perform. The extension of the work of the

various departments into which our city government is divided is such as to attract attention. It brings the people closely in touch with their government and is a step toward securing that interest in municipal affairs among the voters and residents of the town without which municipal government will not improve however perfect may be its framework. When municipal government performed for its citizens comparatively few functions, and these having little to do with the ordinary run of people, it was not to be expected that the "plain voter" would give time, attention, and thought to the selection of men to fill public offices.

Today, however, municipal government in this city supplies water to the citizen; educates his children with kindergarten, primary, and high schools; it removes his garbage; cleans his streets; quarantines his home with diseases with which it formerly had nothing to do; it examines his children and insists that they shall be in proper physical condition before it admits them to school; it compels him to submit his building plans, his plans for plumbing, his plans for electrical lighting for its approval; it insists upon sanitary keeping of his premises; it furnishes parks and children's playgrounds and provides concerts for his amusement and it removes him from his family if he is tubercular; and in a thousand and one ways it makes itself felt in the lives of each of the inhabitants of the city. It cannot then but be expected that the municipal government will be a vital matter to each of the voters and that these voters will take an interest in it which they did not feel when its functions were less extended.

There has been no liquor legislation of striking importance during the past year, but there has been a thoughtful discussion of the effect of state, county, and local option. To illustrate the problems and results involved in the enforcement of county option the following experience of a leading mid-Ohio town is cited:¹

The city has, for a good many years, been practically in the political control of the liquor interests who have chosen a Republican or Democrat mayor as best suited their purposes. The saloon-keepers have always violated the laws against selling to drunkards and to minors and on Sunday and any other laws that they wished to violate, and in return they expected the mayor to graft off them, in which expectation they were rarely disappointed.

Nearly three years ago the Democratic candidate for mayor openly favored closing the saloons on Sundays, driving out the gamblers, and eliminating wine rooms.

¹ The information is supplied by the editor of the leading responsible paper.

The Republican candidate was supported by the saloon element and was elected by injecting the Sunday base ball issue into the campaign.

Everything then ran wide open, with the enforcement of no liquor laws, until almost two years ago when a county option election was brought on. For a few weeks before this election the saloons closed on Sundays and said they had closed their wine-rooms.

The county voted the saloons out. The city and county officials were all Republicans and the Republican organization was in close sympathy with the liquor organization. There was a concerted movement to ignore the liquor laws and no effort was made for their enforcement, except by a body of citizens styling themselves the Civic League.

With the county officials asleep and the city officials in league with the law violators and trying to make a joke of the liquor statutes, the arrests for drunkenness under the first year of no legalized saloons decreased fifty-two per cent from the previous year.

Some of the leading members of the Civic League have had their homes and factories dynamited, assaults have been made on the streets upon citizens interested in the law enforcement, and many threats have been made by the liquor interests, but the work goes on regardless of the mayor and police. Violators of the liquor laws are taken before the mayor of a village in the country and there fined. Charges have been filed with the Governor of the state against the mayor of this city for non-enforcement of law and his trial will soon be held.

It has been stated, and it is probably true, that the saloon element is not violating the laws to nearly so great an extent as when the saloons were legalized. They have had their own way for so long that any restraint is burdensome and the direct encouragement given to them by the city officials has made conditions dangerous to life and property.

Atlanta occupies a somewhat unique position on the prohibition question. Georgia is a *prohibition* state, and there can be no denial that Atlanta is enforcing the state prohibition law a great deal better than any other city in the South. "Near beer" and similar soft drinks followed in the wake of the prohibition law, but so careful were Atlanta officials to see that the general law was not violated, that recently the city council passed a law specifying that no soft drink of any kind should contain so much as four per cent of alcohol. The state law does not make a provision about the quantity of alcohol in soft drinks, but the amount arrived at in the minds of Atlanta's lawmakers was reached following a decision of the state Court of Appeals, in a recent case

in which it stated that that court would admit a drink intoxicating that contained as much as four per cent of alcohol.

The decision of the Supreme Court of Illinois in the case of *United States of America, appellant, v. Lewis Hraskey, appellee*, is of far-reaching importance and deserves mention in this connection. The court in this case held that a person who has knowingly and habitually violated the Sunday closing law of the state had not behaved "as a man of good moral character" and as one who was "well disposed to the good order of the people." Consequently the appellee, who it was conceded had followed the general practice of saloon-keepers in East St. Louis, and had persistently sold liquor on Sunday contrary to the law, was held to be an undesirable citizen and as such not entitled to be naturalized. The court in its opinion declared:

It is essential to the safety and perpetuity of government that laws should be observed and enforced until repealed. The decision as to the wisdom of the Sunday closing statute rests with the legislature and not with the courts. As long as it is the law it should be observed. The courts should not be, and as a rule are not charged with executive or legislative functions, but they are charged with the responsibility of deciding, when the question is properly presented, that a law is in force even if it is not observed by all citizens or enforced by all public authorities.

In police matters the complete exoneration by the Cleveland Civil Service Commission of Chief of Police Fred Kohler on every accusation made against him is deserving of mention in view of the prominence which Chief Kohler has attained by reason of his efficient administration of his department and the introduction of some radical ideas in regard to arrests. Following his reinstatement Chief Kohler once more put in practice his "golden rule," declaring to his force that bygones were bygones, that he cherished no enmity against detectives who testified against him, and that each man's job was secure so long as he delivered the goods. Another interesting event in police matters during the year was Mayor Gaynor's letter to his new commissioner of police, in which he outlined plans and policies that should be subserved in the management and control of a great metropolitan police force. It constitutes a sub-

stantial addition to police literature, and helps to clarify the situation not only in New York but elsewhere. Even though one may not agree with all of his conclusions, it is the sincere effort of an honest man to state clearly and effectively the principles which should be followed in administering the police force and executing the great mass of sumptuary laws which have found their way into the statute books of the city and state.

A movement to secure home rule in police matters in Missouri cities is making satisfactory progress.

The subject of control of public-service corporations and the valuation of their property is receiving attention at the hands not only of economists, but of city officials and municipal students generally. A number of important reports on various phases of the question have been published during the year, as well as a variety of significant magazine articles. In addition Dr. Delos F. Wilcox is putting through the press a book on municipal franchises embodying his experience and studies as an expert connected with the Public Utilities Commission No. 1 of New York, and his long years of study of this question.

A significant development of the past year in connection with franchises was the institution of a suit in March last by the receiver of the New York City Railway Company to recover from the Metropolitan Securities Company directors the sum of \$2,797,200 lost from the City Railways treasury between 1902 and 1904 by the discount of its ten-year notes at 70 and their early redemption at par. The same directors also have been compelled to pay back other large sums of money, the exact amount of which has not been publicly disclosed, in settlement of their methods of "high finance." That exploits in "high finance" among public-service corporations were not confined to the metropolis but have been widespread and reached into the affairs of many of the corporations in smaller communities was shown in the investigation conducted by the New York Public Service Commission, No. 2. As a result of Governor Hughes's far-reaching policy the franchise problem in New York municipalities is being placed upon a higher and more substantial plane. Mr. Kennedy, the secretary of the commission, in his review of

the work of the commission, has declared that the law is now firmly intrenched and among the solidest of the statutes of the state.

Generally speaking, the opinion of the people of the state without any considerable number of exceptions, and of the corporation managers is that the great powers of the statute have been wisely administered by the commission. There can be no reason why each succeeding year will not add to the usefulness of the work which can be accomplished under the law, and great benefit accrue alike to the corporations and to the public which they serve. . . . The provision of capitalization had had but one effect, that of enforcing sound and honorable principles in corporate management. It is the fact, repeatedly testified to before the commissions, that securities authorized by commissions command a premium from the bond houses and investors.

Cleveland's street railway settlement went into effect about March 1 last. Since then the wages of the men have been increased in the judgment of some almost abnormally, making them higher than in any of the large cities within 300 miles of Cleveland. The three-cent fare with one cent for transfer has thus far stood the strain. In the opinion of those who have followed the situation carefully the most serious danger facing the continuance of this low fare arises from the fact that although the settlement provided five cents per car mile for maintenance and depreciation, which is more than is expended by any street railway in the United States, with possibly two or three exceptions, the company has hitherto kept the road in a somewhat run-down condition, and will endeavor to have arbitration under the lease for the raising of the rate per car mile in order to improve the road out of the maintenance fund, as it claims the franchise permits. If this is done fares will probably have to be raised somewhat for a year or two.

The Minneapolis gas situation has been cleaned up satisfactorily to the interests of the public, and Kansas City has defeated a proposal to extend its street railway franchises for an undue time. Denver seems to be in the way of settling its long-pending water question. At a regular city election held May 17, the offered franchise of the Denver Union Water Company was defeated by about 5,000 majority. At the same

election an amendment to the charter of the city was adopted by a majority something over 2,000. This provided that three persons therein named should constitute a public utilities commission for the term of two, four, and six years respectively, and that it should be their duty to offer the water company \$7,000,000 in bonds of the city as a compromise, for this is estimated to be much in excess of the real value of the plant, some of which is now over 20 years old; and if this offer should not be accepted, then to proceed to construct a new plant, and for that purpose, or in the event of the acceptance of the offered price, the question should be submitted to the people of voting \$8,000,000 in bonds at a special election to be held on the first Tuesday in September. The company refused to offer \$7,000,000 in bonds, and is negotiating with the commission for a further settlement.

In San Francisco what is known as the Geary Street bond issue carried by a vote of 31,185 for to 11,694 against the proposition. This will enable the city to operate a trunk line of considerable importance. Public opinion was somewhat divided over the proposition, but the majority no doubt voted for the bonds, not because they were primarily in favor of municipal operations, but because they were so much irritated against the poor service given by the United Railroads, which operates most of the lines in the city. As usually happens in such cases, the whole matter has been thrown into the courts through an effort by one of the parties operating the present road to enjoin the city from selling the bonds as authorized.

Los Angeles has made some interesting contributions to franchise matters, and through its recently appointed Board of Public Utilities has done some effective work in settling long-standing local difficulties and in securing some favorable court decisions. Its first annual report represents a very useful year of service.

Graft charges during the year have not diminished, but on the contrary, they seem to have increased, but unlike previous occasions, they have been followed by indictments, proofs, and convictions. To illustrate: the finances of Middlesex

County, Mass., in which the city of Cambridge is located, are having a much-needed overhauling. The investigation of them has developed some very interesting facts. Here are several: \$243 as paid for a cow, \$147.10 for a range (the salesman of the Cambridge Gas Company, when asked what sort of a range could be had for that amount, asked if it was to be gold-plated), \$23.73 for hanging pictures in the jail, \$614.32 for a private bathroom for a woman prisoner, \$2,073 for unspecified extras. One of the principal assessors of the city has been tried and convicted on various counts of larceny, his prosecution growing out of the complaints preferred and prosecuted by the Tax Payers' Association of Cambridge.

Lawrence, Mass., enjoys the unpleasant notoriety of having its mayor sentenced to three years in the penitentiary, convicted of conspiracy to bribe other city officials. Three other officials convicted at the same time were given various terms in prison.

Mayor Gaynor has inflexibly set himself against graft, large and small. Many of his most important reforms have been in the direction, not so much in the way of exposing graft as in eliminating the sources of it. In this way he has effected a saving of large sums to the city, and introduced a new tone into public service. Economy and efficiency have certainly been to the forefront under his administration. As illustrating the care with which he has watched such matters may be cited the letter he wrote to the Commissioner of Corrections, in which he said:

The comptroller calls my attention to a bill against your department dated March 25, for one dozen, one and one-half-inch valve wheels, at \$1.50 each, total \$18. He has sent out in the market and is able to buy them freely at six cents apiece.

You will please forthwith put on trial the purchasing agent, J. C. Long, and the prison warden, Peter A. Mallon, who certified to the correctness of the order and the bill, and dismiss them from the department summarily unless you can bring to me some good reason to the contrary.

The thing seems to be very scandalous and I am not able to perceive the slightest excuse for it.

Anyone looking at the little iron wheel about four inches in diameter would know that it could not cost \$1.50. Meanwhile *I shall expect you*

to look over your entire department and see if such things are not occurring everywhere. Such miserable thievery has to be got rid of in some way.

Pittsburgh's shame and that of Illinois have been widely recounted. There is this striking difference, however, between the two cases: Pittsburgh has been sending its grafters to jail, while Chicago and Illinois have been acquitting them. Possibly the reason for this difference may be scented in the conviction of two men before the Cook County Grand Jury. One was a juror in the second trial of Lee O'Neill Brown on the charge of buying a vote for Lorimer for senator. The other was the man who procured the corruption of the juror. Their stories revealed how they had been paid \$250, \$125 each, by one of the defendant's trio of lawyers, in return for the juror's vote to acquit the defendant.

San Francisco has so long been the center of graft charges, graft crusades, and graft prosecution that former Mayor Taylor of that city was fully justified in asking a committee of public-spirited men to investigate the situation which had given rise to the series of criminal prosecutions which have been known in current literature as "the graft prosecution."

The mayor called together a leading lawyer, a prominent business man, one of the foremost Presbyterian clergymen in the state, William Kent, whose work in Chicago is still remembered with gratitude, the dean of one of the medical colleges, a conservative labor leader, and a Roman Catholic priest. Such a committee, as the *California Weekly* pointed out, was securely above any suspicion of wilful misstatement, hasty judgment, or the charge of being disgruntled or irresponsible agitators. Their stake in the community was too large for these things. The careful and thorough report which this committee presented is sure to attract widespread attention, not only local, but general, as its recommendations are of a perfect and searching character. Perhaps its most striking recommendation was to the effect that a law should be enacted making it a crime for any newspaper to publish as news

any matters for which compensation is directly or indirectly paid, unless the fact that such compensation has been paid or agreed to be paid is

indicated by some plainly distinguishing mark next the news so printed. The jury or judge should be given liberal power of inferring complicity from considerations indirectly given. A person paying such compensation should be permitted to recover the consideration given by him, and immunity granted him, if he discloses the crime. A part of the punishment should consist in forbidding the publication of the paper for a period fixed by the judge. [It also urged that] laws should be enacted for the cancellation of franchises procured by fraud or crime of the owners of the franchises, or of their predecessors in interest. These laws should be of a civil nature, cognizable in a court of equity, so that the extreme technicality of our criminal procedure will not embarrass their enforcement. The mayor and the district attorney, each on his own motion, should have the right to initiate such proceedings in the name of the municipality upon which the fraud has been committed. Their power should be concurrent with that of the state to take similar action in *quo warranto* proceedings.

It was pointed out that the trial of Mr. Calhoun had disclosed that a considerable number of citizens who, when examined under oath as to their qualifications for jury service, complacently declared that they would not convict a man for bribery however convincing the facts, if, since his crime, he had successfully broken a strike which was threatening his investments. As the committee trenchantly points out, a system of public education which produces such men holding such views must be radically defective in both its ethical and political teaching. It declared,

It is believed that no child should be permitted to leave the grammar school until he has had thoroughly instilled into him a strong sense of his obligation to the state to set aside all prejudice or private interest and act as juryman in any case in which he may be summoned. He should be taught that this obligation is sacred, and that its performance is the highest kind of public service, outranking the mere physical courage and devotion of a soldier.

Among the other recommendations of the San Francisco commission is one to the effect that non-partisan municipal elections should be established, that there should be a separate tribunal of a personal character for the judicial determination of the rates and charges of municipal utilities, for the cancellation of franchises procured by fraud, and that the law of evidence should be so changed as to compel corporations to give evidence against themselves.

A new spirit is taking hold in American cities. This has been demonstrated in more than one direction during the past year, not alone in the defeat of men who were responsible for corrupt conditions; not alone in the conviction of those who had participated in graft, but in a sounder public sentiment, a sounder tone in public life. There has been an encouraging multiplication of the agencies working in this direction. The bureaus of municipal research have been in the forefront in the way of securing and publishing accurate knowledge concerning the situation. They are bringing about a healthful change of attitude in the treatment of these questions. Under the old régime denunciation was the chief stock in trade. The one who could hurl the greatest number of opprobrious epithets at a wrongdoer or at an opponent was regarded as the most sincere and successful reformer. All this is changing. In its place we find the careful investigation of facts, the equally careful formulation of charges, and their persistent pressing before the proper tribunals, leaving to the public to apply their own designation to the facts after they are presented to them in a clear-cut, impartial, effective way, by those who know what they are talking about.

In the creation of sound public sentiment another factor is to be found in the increasing effectiveness of the literature put out by civic bodies. The day of the formal, poorly printed report or pamphlet is passing rapidly. Now the highest sort of skill is exercised in so placing the issues before the people that they can easily inform themselves about them. The reports of civic and business bodies are to an increasing degree illustrations of the highest skill in the presentation of facts. Moreover the movement has been greatly assisted by the increase of publications, weekly and monthly, devoted to the enunciation of sound principles and the elucidation of pertinent facts. Some of these publications are issued by the cities themselves. Many are issued by civic bodies.

By way of illustration, during the past year Boston has seen the birth of two intelligent efforts in this direction in the issuance of *New Boston* by the "Boston-1915" movement and the publication of the *Boston Common*. The former is an intelligent

effort to present, not only to the supporters of "Boston-1915" but to all citizens of that metropolitan community, the issues involved in that organization's campaign. The primary purpose of the *Boston Common* is "public service rather than private profit, and to secure for the public absolute freedom from partisanship, sectarianism, prejudice, and the controlling of muzzling influences." The need for such publications is growing. Napoleon is said to have declared that he feared three newspapers more than a hundred thousand bayonets. That is the fear of every evildoer in public office. Publicity is a sure guaranty to the people. At the same time one must look the facts clearly in the face and realize that there are many American newspapers that fail of having the influence they deserve. This is due either to the fact that they are not believed to be free or that they are partisan, that they are interested more in the moment than they are in the permanent solution of difficulties and problems.

There was one feature of the recent municipal election in Milwaukee that was worthy of very thoughtful attention. Mr. Berger, the leading socialist of the city, in commenting on the election of Mr. Seidel as mayor, said:

With six English, two German, and two Polish dailies fighting us, with every inch of space they could spare in their news columns and editorial pages, and all the advertising the Democrats and Republicans could afford to pay for, we won in a walk.

A Topeka dispatch in the *Kansas City Journal*, describing a municipal election in that city, said,

More than 11,000 of the 13,000 voters in Topeka cast their ballots. All of the newspapers supported Mr. Green. His opponent had to push his candidacy through the advertising columns and on billboards. Nevertheless he was elected by a very large majority.

Unfortunately these instances are typical. They explain, however, the growth in popularity, in numbers, and in influence of such publications as we have already referred to. There is no denying that the American electors are informing themselves as never before, both through such publications as have been mentioned and through specially designed publications like

those issued by state and municipal voters' leagues. Publicity is a growing factor in political campaigns. As has already been pointed out, the era of denunciation is passing, and in its place voters are demanding definite information concerning men and issues. This is as it should be.

As illustrating how effective the work of voters' leagues is, we may cite the following: For years the Minnesota legislature was dominated by an organization of the most unprogressive politicians. These men saw that the publication of the story of the Minnesota legislature of 1909, with its complete unanswerable exposure of the personnel and purposes of the machine, would end their political careers. A representative from one of the interior counties, one of the worst offenders, when he first saw a copy, was moved to exclaim, "I think it is an outrage that a man is allowed to print and circulate such a thing. The man seems to be demented, but he goes on indiscriminately assassinating character." This man's fears were fully realized. He was defeated for re-election and with him there fell practically every member of the old organization through which the special interests and politicians dictated legislation. In the words of the report of the Minnesota Citizens' League, "in all 31 such senators and representatives either did not dare to face their records or did so and were defeated at the primaries."

Organizations of business men are giving more and more attention to municipal problems. They are beginning to realize what has so often been pointed out in meetings of the National Municipal League and similar bodies, that good government is about the best asset a city can have. During the last decade Detroit has enjoyed a remarkable growth, as shown by the census figures relating to its population. During the ten years period her growth was 63 per cent, which is a more rapid rate of increase than is shown by any other city of similar size. The population figures for Detroit are 465,766. In 1900 she was thirteenth in the order of American cities; today she probably stands in the eighth place. Pittsburgh's gain during the same period was 18.2 per cent; Milwaukee thirty-one per cent; St. Louis 19.4 per cent.

Various reasons have been assigned for this remarkable and substantial growth, but as the *Chicago News* said at the time the figures were announced, the part played by progressive business organizations and the influence of conditions of municipal government must not be overlooked. Detroit's organizations have worked hard for the upbuilding of their community. The reputation of the city for efficiency of government and for economy and honesty in public expenditures is good as compared with American municipalities generally. The efforts of Pingree to promote honest government in Detroit doubtless are responsible to a considerable degree for the present industrial progress of the city. It is significant that the cities reputed to have the worst municipal government are not in the judgment of the *News* the ones showing the most rapid growth. Manufacturers who are not in search of special privileges naturally establish themselves in cities having the most economical government and furnishing the best living conditions for the working population.

Another interesting development of the year has been the disposition shown by the smaller chambers of commerce and boards of trade in cities ranging in size from 12,000 up to 50,000, to take up civic work and to employ competent and trained men to carry it on. At a recent meeting of the commercial secretaries in Grand Rapids one of the speakers urged that the association unite with the National Municipal League in broadening the civic-service work. He stated that the movement would receive greater impetus and accomplish greater results if the business men as represented in the commercial organizations were behind it. He furthermore suggested that the national association take up this matter and employ a secretary to devote his time and efforts to the work, an expert who would go about the country promoting civic work in the various communities and in the boards of trade and other commercial organizations.

In the words of one of the officials of one of the most effective business organizations in the country:

There is a growing tendency to give civic work a more important place in their scheme of things than it has had. I do not know, however, that this is a development of the past year. Rather it seems to me to be a development extending over even four or five years in most cases and even longer in such exceptional cases as that of the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce. Prophesying is a dangerous business, but I would not be surprised to have some of these business organizations soon officially announce that they consider civic work the most important with which they have to deal.

In Chicago a Women's City Club has been organized, which is destined to become a most influential civic body. The formation of this club is typical of the growing interest of women in civic affairs. We find them taking up questions of housecleaning and adornment and education in an effective way. Indeed, women are coming to realize more and more in each passing year that they can even more effectively than men, in many instances, create the civic standards of a community through close contact with the growing agents and through influence over the teaching forces of a community. Moreover women are coming to feel that they are charged in a special sense, because of their special qualifications in the matter of housekeeping, with the cleanliness of a community. We find in all the leading cities of the country the women are in the forefront in the effort to clean up the streets and keep them clean.

Mrs. Caroline Bartlett Crane's work is equally typical. She is going about the country stirring up the women, and the men for that matter, to their duty and responsibility in the matter of clean and healthy cities. Her lectures are those of a public housekeeper, simple and untechnical. She has visited city after city in the East and West, looking into nooks and crannies and into various things that men, with their far different points of view and perspective, are apt to overlook. As an outsider she has been able to report upon what she found without fear, favor, or partisanship. At the close of her inspection she has written out a full report and submitted it to the bodies directly concerned, with suggestions how to overcome the conditions which she described.

Boston's Women's Municipal League has been conducting a

campaign of education in sanitary matters and working in co-operation with various settlements to relieve conditions in the congested parts of the city. Moreover, it has charged itself with the inspection of streets and alleys. In December last it held an exhibit which on the sanitary side showed contrasting models of dirty ones. Moreover, it is actively spreading a propaganda in regard to the prevention and cure of tuberculosis and similar dread diseases.

The continued, rapid, and widespread interest in the commission form of municipal government and in the question of city charter reform generally, has been the most conspicuous single development during the past year in the realm of city government. A straight commission form of government, in the opinion of Dr. Eliot, one of the most active advocates of the system, requires a commission composed of five elected members, one of whom is called the mayor and acts as chairman of the commission, but has no veto power or any other special power not shared by the other members of the commission. The commission so elected is the source of all authority in the city, makes all ordinances, appoints all officials, collects taxes, and makes all appropriations.

As set forth by its advocates, the significant features of the plan, in addition to those already mentioned, are: Assignments of the important divisions of the city government to individual members of the commission, each of whom is directly responsible for the best conduct of his particular department; adequate compensation to the members of the commission for their time and labor, the city employing all the commissioners at living salaries; regularity, frequency, and publicity of the meetings of the commissioners; all employees selected from eligible lists based on examinations, oral and written, carefully devised to develop merit and fitness; recommendations after examination by an independent civil service commission; the retention in office of all employees so appointed during good behavior; the recall; the granting of all public franchises to be submitted to a vote of the electors.²

² See analysis prepared by the Charleston, S.C., Community Club.

Two other most important features are the introduction of the principle of the short ballot and the elimination of ward lines. In the judgment of long-time students of city affairs these are considered, together with the concentration of authority, as the most effective features of the system.

Some idea of the growth of the commission form of government may be measured by the extent of its adoption within the past four years: Iowa, Kansas, North Dakota, South Dakota, South Carolina, Mississippi, Minnesota, Illinois, Wisconsin, Louisiana, Kentucky, and Oklahoma have commission laws relating to all or certain classes of cities within their respective borders. The list of cities operating under some form of commission government approximates one hundred. There have been numerous modifications of the plan. In some the terms of all the commissioners expire at one and the same time. In others they expire one each year, thus creating the shortest possible ballot and preventing a complete overturn of the government. In certain cities the voters elect commissioners to have charge of certain departments or bureaus; in others the commissioners themselves assign the duties. Keokuk, Iowa, has but three commissioners, but the great majority of cities have five. There are several methods of election: by the non-partisan primary, as in Des Moines; by the French system of two elections, as in Berkeley, Cal.; and by the preferential voting, as in Grand Junction, Colo.

So far the movement has been confined to the smaller communities of the country. The larger ones adopting it are: Gloucester and Haverhill, Mass.; Memphis, Tenn.; Burlington, Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, and Sioux City, Ia.; Kansas City, Leavenworth, Wichita, and Topeka, Kan.; Colorado Springs, Colo.; St. Joseph, Mo.; Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Galveston, Houston, and Waco, Tex. A number of other cities like Buffalo, N.Y., Mobile and Birmingham, Ala., have, through a vote of their electors, expressed a desire for commission government, but so far they have been denied their request by their state legislatures.

The general trend of the more important cities of Massa-

chusetts, outside of Boston, has been toward a commission form of government either with absolute power as in the case of Chelsea or subject to the initiative, referendum, and recall, as under the Des Moines plan. In New York bills providing for a commission form of government in Mount Vernon and Melzinga were passed by the last session of the legislature, but failed for reasons which did not involve the merit of the legislation. Pennsylvania has a full-fledged movement for the establishment of the system in the third-class cities of that state, a formal organization having been established for this purpose. In Virginia a similar movement is on foot, having for its object the amendment of the Virginia constitution, to make possible the establishment of the commission form by such cities as desire to have it. Efforts are pending in Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee to secure the enactment of state laws. There are 128 cities now considering the question of the adoption of some form of commission government, either in the way of an election to adopt a charter under existing state legislation or to secure the necessary power from the state legislature.

This form of city government is still too new in its application to enable one to speak with any degree of finality concerning its merits. That it will solve off-hand all the problems to which a municipality is heir is absurd. In fact the movement is likely to suffer in the near future unless its advocates modify their claims. Within the year claims have been made by its advocates that it had effectually eliminated the social evil, citing the closed town policy of Des Moines. As a result of a change in the personnel of the commission in that city there was a less rigorous enforcement of the laws dealing with this subject, and as a result the enemies of the system heralded the fact from one end of the country to the other that it had broken down and failed. As a matter of fact both claims were wrong. The merit of the commission form was that it enabled the people of Des Moines to establish, with little or no delay, what officials were responsible for the changed conditions of affairs, and through the exercise of public sentiment to bring about a needed enforcement of the laws.

On the other hand it is not fair to regard the movement for the establishment of the commission form of government in American cities as a passing fad. It represents a deep-seated desire on the part of the American people to set their municipal houses in order and simplify their governmental machinery, to concentrate responsibility, and to establish municipal business on a new, firmer, and substantial basis.

Wherever charter reform has been an issue at recent elections the progressive element in the community have won gratifying victories. Boston, for instance, after a vigorous campaign voted by a small majority last December in favor of what is known as plan No. 2, embodying the recommendation of the original finance commission. Under it national party designations on the ballot disappear and with them all the machinery of the caucus, convention and primary, which have hitherto stood between the voter and his final choice at the polls.

Charter revision continues to be the dominant issue in New York City. Governor Hughes during his term of office sought to bring about a complete and satisfactory revision of the charter of the city, steadfastly setting his face against piecemeal tinkering with the form of government. The Ivins Commission appointed by him did what many regarded as one of the most complete and systematic pieces of work ever turned out by a charter commission. It failed of indorsement by the legislature, which was under reactionary influences. That body preferred instead to appoint a committee of its own which considered the Ivins report and expressed its agreement with some features and its disagreement with others. It failed, however, to grasp the fundamental features that Mr. Ivins and his colleagues so carefully worked out. The joint committee announced that it could not accept the basic principles on which the Ivins commission charter was constructed, although it adopted many of its specific suggestions.

Pittsburgh enjoys the reputation of being intensely practical. For years it has been studying itself, or at least some of its most public spirited men have. It has had a series of charters, each an improvement over the former. It has experimented with

commissions in charge of municipal improvements and management. It has had government by the council with the mayor as a figurehead. Now it possesses a mayor who as chief executive is supreme, and with this Pittsburgh seems to be satisfied, but it has found its two chambers of councils with ward representation productive only of bad government. There is therefore a strong demand that the councilmanic and ward systems of representation be reformed. This idea was prominently in view when 48 of its councilmen were indicted for bribery, and within a week after the final graft exposure 5,000 of its citizens met and appointed a committee in the interest of charter legislation. This committee has completed its work and its plan has been approved by the commercial and civic bodies of the city. This is the Pittsburgh plan:

The mayor is to retain his supreme administrative authority. He now appoints and can remove the heads of every department with the exception of the comptroller, which is elective. He is personally responsible for the administration of every department of the city government. Pittsburgh has not always been satisfied with its mayor by any means, but it has never charged his personal shortcomings to the charter. It is with the legislative branch of the government that the plan chiefly deals and the changes proposed are radical. Instead of two chambers of council, one with 27 and the other with 40 members as at present, a single body of nine members is proposed. The councilmen are to be elected by the city at large for the term of four years, five at one biennial election and four at another. They are to receive a salary of \$6,500 annually. A referendum is possible on all ordinances upon petition of 10 per cent of the voters at the last municipal election, and the initiative is to be granted on the petition of 15 per cent of the voters. Nominations of all city officers are to be made by petition of 5 per cent of the voters. The ballot is to be non-partisan, without party names or symbols, and the recall may be demanded upon a petition of 25 per cent of the voters.

West Virginia has had a municipal code commission at work for upward of a year. In its recently published report

provision is made for a large measure of local autonomy. The present governing body of any municipality has the right under the proposed law to name a charter commission, which in turn submits to the direct vote of the people either of the various forms of government above outlined. The functions of the governing bodies, however, are definitely fixed. The method of taxation, the granting of franchises, ordinances, elections, registration, duties of officers in the collection and disbursement of the funds of the municipality are also definitely fixed by the proposed law and cannot be changed. Generally speaking, however, these proposed codes increase the charter powers of a city, centralizing power and responsibility, and reduce the number of elective officers.

An important development in charter reform is the growth of public sentiment in behalf of municipal home rule. As Dr. Fairlie pointed out at the Pittsburgh meeting of the National Municipal League, the principle of home rule has come to be more generally recognized even in special legislation. A significant event of the past year was the large measure of attention given to the subject of municipal home rule by the League of American Municipalities at its meeting in St. Paul. Mayor Mahool, of Baltimore, in a thoughtful paper indorsing the principles of the National Municipal League's Municipal Program, declared even if the legislature

were always wise and always honest their interference in local affairs would be undesirable. The representatives are state officers, elected to look after matters of general not local concern. They are not familiar with city conditions and can have no definite idea of its needs. Furthermore sufficient publicity of proposed measures is not secured, and the people to be affected have very little opportunity of enlightening the lawmakers. The lobbyist may secure the passage of his measure before effective opposition in the distant city can materialize, and most serious of all, the legislator is not responsible for his action to those who are governed by his measure. He is under no obligation to the city and does not depend upon it for his political future. In such an attitude no man, however patriotic, can exercise that enthusiastic solicitude for the city's welfare, the state in state affairs, the individual in individual affairs, but the municipality must have permission from the legislature for everything it does.

In many places the commission form of government is enacted as a result of home rule provisions in the legislative enactment or in the state constitution. In fact, the present movement for the commission form of government seems to be in the direction of passing a general law the provisions of which may be availed of by any city in the state upon an affirmative vote of its electors. There is doubt of the constitutionality of such enactments in a few states like Pennsylvania, for instance, but even there, there are not wanting those well versed in the law who maintain that such home rule provisions are not contrary to the requirements of the fundamental law of the state.

As a result of the discussion at the St. Paul meeting of the League of American Municipalities that organization unanimously adopted the following resolution:

Resolved, That the League of American Municipalities reaffirms its firm belief in the principle of municipal home rule, as being the one absolutely vital measure needful for the prosperity, progress, and moral well-being of the American city, and to remove from it such reproach as now clings to it; and be it further

Resolved, That this league, speaking in the name of cities extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Hudson Bay to the Gulf of Mexico, respectively but earnestly protests to the legislatures of such states and provinces as are concerned, against the denial of a right, which is fully conferred upon business corporations, and the perpetuation of a system that throttles progress, stifles aspiration, and encourages political corruption and brigandage.

Many present-day municipal abuses have grown up and flourished like the green bay tree, not because of criminal intent, but because of lax methods and legislation. To meet just this situation, to introduce intelligent order and supervision into the conduct of municipal affairs, to promote knowledge, system, and efficiency in public business, has been the aim of the bureaus of municipal research, the first of which was established in New York in 1906. "The bureau of municipal research is only another name for the civic auditing company, a company of financial experts who make it their business to know how to conduct other men's business."

So successful have been the methods followed by the New York Bureau of Municipal Research that similar bureaus have been established in other cities: Philadelphia, 1908; Cincinnati, 1909; Memphis, 1909; Hoboken, 1910; Boston, 1910; Chicago, 1910; Milwaukee, 1910; St. Paul, 1910; Minneapolis, 1910. Their introduction has resulted in the saving of considerable sums of money to the city in the annual budget as well as greater efficiency in all the departments of the city government, and in New York in the formulation and adoption of an intelligent municipal budget.

A budget exhibit was arranged in 1909 by the New York Bureau as a matter of public enterprise and instruction. It proved so helpful and so successful that the city's board of estimate and apportionment officially secured \$25,000 of the city's money with which to give a public budget exhibit in 1909. In this way New York has established a precedent in getting closer than any other city in America to a working ideal of municipal administration, where unit cost can be determined and its reasonableness intelligently considered. With this information in hand budget making need not longer be mere guessing as is at present the case in a vast majority of cities. The officer making an appropriation must show not only how much he spent in the past year, what he spent it for, and what he accomplished by the expenditure, but he must show just what he intends to accomplish in the course of the coming year, how he intends to accomplish it, why the proposed work is necessary, and just what it will cost. All of this is important, but still more important is the fact that the exhibit put this information in such graphic and practical form that the public could readily see and understand and reach a conclusion whether they were getting their money's worth, and if not, who was responsible for the failure. As *Municipal Facts* pointed out, never in New York's history has there been an administration like the present one. "Never was there such a board of estimates. In one and the same breath it shows the taxpayers how their money is being spent and tells the department heads not to spend so much of it."

Boston's bureau of municipal research is an official one. The

New York organization is a voluntary affair of private citizens, who felt that the city's business was not always conducted in a businesslike way, who gave their money, their experience, and their time to the work they set themselves to do, and beyond mere researching they offer suggestion, help, and co-operation to department heads who want it, or appear on investigation to need it. The cost of all this, calculated in terms of money expended alone, has been \$100,000 a year, but the results have been worth so many times that sum that the citizens of other places have been moving to imitate their example. Boston's bureau is quite different. As sensed by its finance commission, Boston's real need is not so much of accountants as of men who can direct accountants if it becomes necessary to employ them; not of men skilled in working out unit cost systems so much as of men who can see through all the peculiarities of concealing systems, of a man who finally can read department reports and make sane and logical comments on them.

Chicago, through the initiative of its City Club, has organized a bureau of public efficiency. It is an unofficial organization supported by private citizens to scrutinize the systems of accounting in the eight local departments of Chicago, to examine the methods of purchasing materials and supplies and letting and executing contracts in these bodies, to examine their pay-rolls, with a view to determining the efficiency of such expenditures, to make constructive suggestions for improvements, and to co-operate with public officials in the installation of improved methods, to furnish the public with exact information regarding public revenues and expenditures, and thereby promote efficiency and economy in the public service.

During the year the Merriam commission on city expenditures has been conducting an investigation into the finances of the city government, and within a few months will publish its report covering this field in a general way.

Accompanying the development of the idea of municipal research and coincident with it, has been the growth of the demand for municipal reference bureaus. As the national Municipal

League has from the beginning of its work in 1894 persistently maintained, the value of comparative data in dealing with municipal questions can hardly be overestimated, especially when so many new problems are constantly arising. A department of this kind would prevent many ill-advised measures from becoming laws, and would often save the city an actual loss by preventing the passage of ordinances which have proved unsatisfactory in other cities.

This idea of a municipal reference library is by no means a new or untried one. Departments or bureaus of this description have already been established in Baltimore, Milwaukee, Newark, N.J., and departments of statistics have for some years existed in a number of cities, notably New York, Chicago, and Boston. Los Angeles has a privately maintained bureau. A number of states have also established similar bureaus, among them Wisconsin, New York, Rhode Island, California, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and bills have been introduced in other legislatures providing for their adoption. Foreign cities years ago recognized the necessity of such departments in some form.

American cities have little or no latitude given them in the matter of taxation. The constitutions of 75 per cent of the states require uniform taxation of all property under what is known as the general property tax system. Few statute laws have been passed during the year touching upon the matter of municipal taxation. A most significant occurrence, however, was the introduction into the New York Legislature of a bill asked for by Mayor Gaynor's administration and the New York Merchants' Association, to exempt from taxation personal property in the city of New York. Although the request was denied, the action of the mayor and of the association was generally regarded as an official recognition of the breakdown of the idea of local taxation of personal property.

The most notable changes in municipal taxation are occurring in Canada, where in several provinces cities have been granted a large measure of home rule. In British Columbia a general statute has for years permitted municipalities to assess

improvements at a lower percentage than the land. A recent statute fixed a maximum assessment of 50 per cent for improvements, while allowing a lower rate or an entire exemption by vote of the local council. Vancouver, in March, 1910, exempted improvements entirely, while assessing land at 100 per cent of its value. This followed a progressive reduction of assessments on improvements extending over some years, beginning at a 75 per cent assessment, then 50 per cent, then 25 per cent. Several other cities in British Columbia have also gradually reduced the percentage, while they now exempt improvements entirely.

In the Province of Alberta the larger cities have for some years exempted improvements, raising their revenues chiefly from a tax on land values with a slight business tax and a tax on franchises of public-service corporations when these are not municipally owned. Most of the new villages asking for incorporation are also requesting this same power of exemption which is granted upon petition to the local authorities.

In Ontario the local taxation of personal property was abolished in 1903, a business tax being substituted. At the present session of the provincial legislature a petition was presented, signed officially by over two hundred municipalities, asking for the same right of home rule in the partial or total exemption of improvements as exists in British Columbia.

Prince Rupert is starting its municipal career without taxing improvements. Vancouver and Prince Rupert are probably destined to grow with tremendous rapidity. Doubtless they would grow tremendously if they had the worst system of taxation in the world, because they are the ports of Western Canada and the terminals of great railway systems; but in the judgment of tax reformers by the policy of not penalizing improvements they are certain to grow with all the greater rapidity, and land speculation will be, to a considerable extent, discouraged, to the great advantage of the growing communities.

A notable taxation settlement was that providing for the arrearages of franchise taxes due the City of New York from the Metropolitan Street Railway Company and other corpora-

tions arrived at in May last. The basis of the settlement is practically on the 65 per cent allowance, on which the Third Avenue Railroad has settled its total franchise indebtedness. The Metropolitan at the date of the May settlement had paid \$2,640,000 into the city treasury on account, and under the agreement the total will be increased to \$6,390,000. This is exclusive of the Manhattan Elevated Company, the Second Avenue and Central Park, and the North and East River lines, whose indebtedness will be settled, it is expected, on much the same basis. With the final approval of this plan of payment practically all the arrearage franchise taxes due the city will have been settled, with the exception of the claim against the New York Central Railroad.

This being the year of the taking of the decennial census, the newspapers and periodicals generally have been filled with statistics concerning the cost of municipal government and the growth of population. In addition the Census Bureau's annual reports have furnished the usual quota of interesting figures. The bulletin issued on July 7 last showed that \$405,000,000 had been spent in 1908 in maintaining and operating the departments of the 158 cities having an estimated population of 30,000 or more. The maintenance of schools and the protection of life and property by the police represented 55 per cent of this total. For the whole group of cities the average per capita expense for schools was \$4.70, for police departments, \$2.25, for fire departments, \$1.72. The increased cost of maintaining the administrative departments in recent years is illustrated by the fact that in 147 cities of over 30,000 population in 1902 the cost was \$13.36 per capita, while for the same cities in 1908 it was \$16.81.

The general financial transactions of the 158 cities involved the receipt and expenditure of more than \$1,250,000,000. Payments amounted to \$1,284,000,000 and receipts to \$1,336,000,000. The excess of the receipts over payments was due to large loans by cities during the year, and is reflected in the cash on hand at the close of the year.

Payments on account of outlays for new purposes or new

work by the 158 cities above mentioned amounted for 1908 to \$275,003,695, as compared with \$244,117,298 in 1907. Over one-third of the 1908 expenditures was paid by New York City. The figures are as follows: New York, \$83,417,149, Chicago, \$18,093,086, and Philadelphia, \$14,473,184.

The total net indebtedness of the 158 cities at the close of 1908 was \$1,718,000,000, and of this amount 39.8 per cent, or \$684,000,000, is credited to New York City alone. That city had more than seven times the indebtedness of any other city and more than one-half the total of the 29 largest cities of the country. The per capita net debt of New York City was \$157.74: and the only other cities having a per capita net indebtedness of over \$100 were Cincinnati, Boston, Galveston, Portland, Newton (Mass.), Pueblo (Colo.), and Pawtucket. The increase in the net debt for the fiscal year 1908 was \$185,877,856 as compared with a total increase for 1907 of \$120,930,631. As the census report pointed out, in any discussion of indebtedness it should be remembered that the value of public improvements, and especially the amounts expended on public service enterprises, should be taken into consideration. Many cities own their water works, some their lighting plants, and a considerable proportion of the indebtedness of such cities may be incurred in the purchase or construction of such plants.

Kansas City is establishing some new civil service precedents that are likely to prove of usefulness. In the first place the new commission which Mayor Brown appointed began its examinations with the highest positions of the several departments that were not exempted under the law. This policy was adopted, first because it was thought that it would obtain men having authority in each of the departments, who being selected on the merit system would be entirely in sympathy with its purposes. It was also thought it would result in more loyalty in employees to their superior officers if they knew the man in charge had already passed the test to which they later would be subjected, rather than the reverse. This was indeed a wise idea, for if the merit system is to be accepted heartily by the rank and file they must be persuaded that it represents merit

all along the line, rather than in spots, and that it applies to all, high and low alike. The commission has adopted the idea of having for each group of examinations a committee of three experts to conduct the examination and grade papers. This is a wholesale adoption of the plan worked out by the Chicago commission at the time it held its examination for librarians of the Public Library. It is believed it will work out well.

The results have been highly satisfactory. Good men have been chosen, party lines have been wiped out, and the merit system established in the respect and confidence of the office-holding class and of the people.

Boston's civil service experience is proving interesting and illuminating. It will be recalled that under the new charter the appointment of all heads of departments must be submitted by the mayor to the state civic service commission for independent investigation and approval. If that board rejects the appointment then the mayor must appoint another whose selection in turn must be submitted to the civil service commission. As *City Affairs*, the publication of the Boston Good Government Association, declared, the civic service commission now occupies the center of the stage. It has dared to differ with the mayor on the qualities that go to make up an expert. The mayor realizes that the clause of the charter dealing with this subject is doing just what it was intended to do. It is keeping out of office the old style of political heads of departments and is treating the people to the spectacle of the new standards actually put into practice.

In its work thus far the commission deserves the thanks of the community. It has performed an unpleasant duty conscientiously, carefully, and (rare virtue?) silently.

In Chicago the merit system continues to make substantial progress. There is no doubt that the civil service law in force is sound. As the president of the civil service reform association declared in a recent communication:

If we had it to draft again there would be no important changes beyond covering any exempt position. The trial clause has been most attacked, but

after all has been said our executive committee is of the opinion that its legislative defects may be corrected in administrations conforming to the terms of the act. We know of no better law.

Concerning results, the law has been of immense benefit to the city. Any attempt to weaken or defeat the law, if it clearly appeared to be such, could be beaten at the polls by an overwhelming majority. The administration is Republican. The employees are nearly all Democratic. To quote again the president of the civil service reform association:

There are five types of attempts to beat the law: first, the creation of new departments, the heads thereof being exempt under the civil service act; second, statutes passed by the jack-pot legislature at Springfield in violation of the principles of home rule, taking over municipal activities or creating new ones and providing for spoil appointments; for example, parks, sanitary district, education, municipal tuberculosis hospital; third, sixty-day appointments continued from year to year, the number decreasing, however, each year; fourth, common labor employment where no adequate way of eliminating ward politics has yet been devised; fifth, use of corrupt or incompetent judges to tie up examinations, interfere with promotions, classifications, and generally horse-play with the law, thus necessitating temporary appointments, delaying efficient reform, restoring discharged employees, holding the law up as unworkable and responsible for all manner of administrative ills. The introduction and use of efficiency records represents a development of far-reaching importance.

There has been no appreciable diminution of interest in nomination reform, although there has been an increasing appreciation of the fact that primary reform is only a step towards the restoration of popular government. Yet the best primary act, as the *Chicago Record-Herald* has so wisely pointed out, is only a tool. It is not a substitute for hard work and intelligence. For a while there was danger that some of the more zealous advocates of the new politics might regard nomination reform as a panacea for all our political ills and as effective in itself. Today nomination is to the fore-front in those states which have not yet secured a law authorizing direct nomination. In those states where the law has been established the aim is to perfect and extend it, not to destroy it.

The movement for the establishment of the initiative, referen-

dum, and recall is a part of the same movement as that manifesting itself in the demand for the direct nomination of candidates. They are all part of the desire for a more responsive electoral machinery. As for the past ten years, Oregon has retained its leadership in this direction. There has been a feeling on the part of many that the initiative and referendum have been somewhat overworked in that state. It must be conceded, however, that the results so far have not justified this fear, inasmuch as the Oregon voters have shown remarkable discrimination in their voting up or voting down propositions submitted to them under the initiative and referendum laws. It is true there have been efforts made to submit trivial questions but these have not interfered with the intelligent expression of opinion on questions submitted.

In Illinois a vigorous campaign for the adoption of the initiative and referendum has been waged. The proposition submitted to the voters at the November election was in the following form:

Shall the next general assembly submit to the voters of the State of Illinois at the next following state election an amendment to the state constitution providing for the control of legislation by the people by means of the initiative and the referendum, said amendment to provide for the initiation of legislation upon the petition of eight per cent of the voters, and for the reference of legislation upon the petition of 5 per cent of the voters, the action of a majority of electors voting to be final, thus restoring to the people the power which they once held but which they delegated to the general assembly by the Constitution.⁵

No small part of the present popularity of the initiative and referendum and the recall has been due to the growth of the commission form of government. The results in those cities operating under that system have been so uniformly beneficial that long time opponents of the initiative and the referendum are weakening in their position. As a matter of fact there is nothing new in the referendum, for from the beginning the people have voted on the adoption of constitutions and constitutional amendments. The modern application of the principle,

⁵ The advisory vote on this was overwhelmingly favorable.

however, represents an improvement in that instead of submitting the entire instrument covering all phases of government, questions are submitted one by one in a form which admits of a comparatively easy formulation of a sound judgment. Advocates of the short ballot have been fearful lest the growth of the initiative and the referendum movement would militate against the movement. Experience with the short ballot and the referendum and the initiative has not been sufficiently extended to justify one in making any dogmatic assertions one way or the other. With the concentration of legislative and administrative duties in the hands of a small number of elective officers, it would seem as if there should be adequate provision for the voters to declare themselves upon the questions of policy, otherwise there would not be that separation of the policy determining functions from the policy executing functions.

A steady progress of public opinion in favor of the short ballot is to be noted. Involving as it does constitutional changes, there is a very little to report in the way of concrete accomplishment, although the adoption of the commission form of government represents one form of short ballot, and in this direction there has been a very substantial advance during the past year. Moreover the agitation of the short ballot idea has brought about a more widespread consideration of the whole question of our governmental machinery, with the result of awakening the people to their duty and responsibility in the premises.